

## REMARKS

Claim Status

Claim 17 is pending in the application. Claim 17 has been amended to focus only on the controlled release tablet, previously recited. Entry of the amendment is requested.

Formal Matters

For the record, there are no objections or rejections under §112 or §102 outstanding.

Rejections under 35 USC 103

Claim 17 stands rejected over US 6,632,347 in view of US 5,106,465, for reasons of record at pages 3-4 of the Office Action.

Claim 17 also stands rejected under §103 over US 6,306,281 in view of '347 and further in view of '465, for reasons of record at pages 5-8 of the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully traverse all rejections under §103, to the extent they may apply to the Claim 17 as now amended.

Previous arguments in support of patentability continue to apply, but will not be exhaustively repeated herein for the sake of brevity. The Examiner's attention is directed to the disclosure at page 17, especially lines 11-15 of the specification. There, Applicants disclose the oxidation process, the reversion to the halogen dioxide salt and the return of the depleted effluent with its reverted halogen dioxide salt back to the source of aqueous feed solution. This is not a mere re-circulation of the effluent, followed by its disposal; rather, it constitutes a re-cycling that helps replenish the halogen dioxide salt for re-use in the system.

The Examiner's attention is now particularly directed to the use of the slow dissolving tablet source of the halogen dioxide salt. Together with the re-cycle step, these two aspects of the claimed technology achieve an optimal balance of halogen dioxide salt usage and performance.

With regard to '347, a "concentrated salt solution" is prepared using "vacuum dried crystalline salt." (column 19, lines 64-66.) There is clearly no suggestion to use a controlled release tablet, per the present invention.

The '465 patent adds nothing to '347 with regard to either the tablet or the re-cycle. As repeatedly stated, '465 employs an aqueous solution (e.g. column 9, lines 37,

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58 and 65; column 10, lines 13, 22, 26, etc.). And, as shown in figure 2, the "aqueous chlorite feed" does not appear to contemplate any re-cycle stream.

Net: The combination of '347/'465 does not teach or suggest all elements of Applicants' claimed invention. Therefore, it is submitted that the rejection of amended Claim 17 on this combination of documents should be withdrawn.

With regard to the rejection over '281 and '347/'465, the above comments regarding the disclosures of '347, '465 and/or their combination continue to apply. Simply stated, then, it is submitted that the combination of '281/'347/'465 does not support a *prima facie* rejection under §103.

As is clear from the figure and the accompanying disclosure, the cell of '281 is designed for "up-flow." See column 2, line 60. Nothing therein relates to re-cycle nor to the use of a controlled release tablet. Net: This unique feature of the present invention is not taught or even vaguely suggested by the combination of '281/'347/'465. Accordingly, no *prima facie* grounds for this rejection exist and it should be withdrawn.

Overall Net: While the various cited documents discuss a variety of reservoirs, meters, pumps, valves, etc., all designed to regulate brine input to their electrolysis systems, none suggest the use of a controlled release tablet, per Claim 17 as now amended. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections are requested.

In light of the foregoing, early and favorable action on Claim 17 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY

By

  
Jerry J. Xetter  
Registration No. 26,598  
(513) 983-6470

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Customer No. 27752